

render obedience to church? Christ is the rewarder—the only one. If we love and obey Him, He will give all we can receive, and what more can we expect, or wish for. Churches may make “rules,” and require obedience to them, at the expense of members.—I mean at the expense of numbers—in other words they may expel those who will not adhere to their rules and regulations, but what will it signify in the end? They have nothing to offer as a reward for obedience to their “rules,” nor nothing to give. We get all our “Solid comfort” from Christ, and if we get nothing but what Christ gives, why should we be enslaved to anything or obey—all for NOTHING, yea worse than NOTHING. Who can tell?

—I just heard a circumstance related from which it seems we might learn a lesson.—In the City here where there are all kinds and classes of people from the highest to the lowest, from the most devoted to the most depraved, a man, a father, if worthy the appellation, of no fear of God, nor regard for man, really a citizen of a so-called Christian community, did in the presence of friends take his little child upon his knee, and teach it to say profane, and wicked words, and on the same occasion in the absence of the mother when putting the little one to bed, it protested against going to bed without saying its prayers. The father told it, that it would have to go to bed that time without saying them, because he knew nothing about praying, and put the little one crying, to bed. This teaches at least two things. First, how depraved and heartless a man can become, to even teach his own children the bad, and lead them in the way that leads to hell. Who can imagine the extreme punishment that such a man should justly receive.

Second. What an influence, a mother may have over her children, even against such opposition. A drunken wicked father may teach his little ones to use profane language, but still a praying mother may teach them to pray. But what a contrast. One parent teaching the little one to profane the name of its God, the other to adore Him. My Christian brethren and sisters, are we doing our duty? Cannot we help such mothers? Let us pray for them at least.

Kansas City, Mo.

The Last Tear.

When Haldame, that eminent servant of the Lord, sat by the dying bed of his wife, as he closed her eyes a single tear gushed out and ran down upon her pale face. He said, “I wiped it away, and I thought, ‘It is the last one, for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.’”

We have not yet seen the end of our weeping, but how often we weep for those who shall weep no more. Our tears are still flowing, theirs are forever dried. Our hearts are still sad, but for them there are no more heart pangs nor sadness. Our paths are beset with thorns, and hedged in with the briars of the wilderness, but they shall never tread its desert wastes again. Blessed are they who reach such rest as this, and who come through all the storms and sorrows of this weary world, to the calm brightness of that eternal day where the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw its shining, in that land where no enemy shall ever come, and from which no friends shall ever go away.

Here we may sow in tears, there we shall reap in joy: here our hearts may be heavy with griefs we cannot tell, but there grief and anxiety and trouble and temptation shall be unknown; and there shall remain for us the days of peace, and rest, of tearless gladness, and of everlasting joy.—The Common People.

When we are most filled with heavenly love, and only then, are we best fitted to bear with human infirmity, to live above it and forget its burden.—MARIA HARE.

Every human soul has the germ of some flowers within, and they would open if they could only find sunshine and free air to expand in. Not having enough of sunshine is what ails the world. Make people happy, and there will not be half the quarreling or a tenth part of the wickedness there is.—Mrs. Child.

Faith Versus Wisdom.

A SERMON SKELETON.

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Cor. 2: 5.

The domain of faith is clearly to be distinguished from the domain of human wisdom. Men are ever confounding the two. Faith they think is simply intellectual belief, produced by pure reasonings. Religious faith is often wrought exactly as a proof in Mathematics or logic. They will say “I cannot reason out a demonstrative proof of Christianity, therefore I refuse to believe it is true.” Now what is the proof of faith as distinguished from the proof of moral reasoning? How do we know things? well by different kinds of proof. If I put my finger in the fire it burns me. If I am hungry I desire food. If I am in a fever I feel discomfort. If I hear music it delights me. If I smell perfume or taste sweet things it gratifies me. This we call sensible proof. I do not reason about them. No moral or spiritual sympathies are called into exercise. I merely prove them by pure physical sensations, exactly as a brute does.

If a man tells me that the earth revolves, that two and two make four that a whole is greater than its part, that the sides of a right angle triangle are greater than its third side, that certain methods are better than others, I believe these things on the evidence of my reason, my senses have nothing to do with the proof; it is a process of pure reason.

A third method of reason is moral or spiritual proof. The proof that appeals to our moral nature. When I see moral qualities in a man, when he speaks to me, and lets me see his feelings, I instinctively receive impressions concerning him. I say he is a good man, a kind man, a true man &c. I do not know enough of the man to reason out these conclusions, but there is something in me which recognizes these qualities in him. If he be a hypocrite and pretend to have qualities which he has not, he may deceive me, but even that does not affect the validity of this method of proof. Why, life would be impossible if we could not trust men until we had collected evidence about them. Look at a jury, witnesses flatly contradicting one another. The jury conclude from their own moral decision. We say, “I know that man speaks the truth,” there is an atmosphere of trust in him that we readily recognize by vision of sense, the vision of the understanding does not aid us; it is pure direct, spiritual perception, as direct and certain as light is to the eye.

When God speaks of religious things to me, He does not appeal to my physical senses, to my sight, or my touch, or my hearing. He does not appeal to my intellectual reason, as the multiplication table does. He appeals directly to my sense of religion.

Now the strong tendency of men is to interchange these methods of proof, and so they bring more infinite confusion into their thought and life. I can believe nothing says a Scientific Materialist, that I cannot prove. How nonsensical! Suppose the brute would say “I will believe nothing that I cannot prove by the senses which I cannot taste or feel. I will not believe in your mathematical Astronomy, or geology or Chemistry.” Is he not as much justified in denying your rational proof, as you are in denying my spiritual proof? Your rational proof belongs to a higher nature than his. My spiritual truth belongs to a higher nature than mere reason. You cannot by reason prove right and wrong, of love and purity or goodness. You can only feel them. The scientific materialist tells us that he has explored the domain of nature, but cannot find God. As well may a surgeon conducting a post-mortem examination tell us that he cannot find the pure patriot, the loving father in the Anatomy. Moral qualities are not always found by physical tests.

Faith is that quality of our spiritual nature which when it hears truth, sees purity, feels love, it simply and implicitly believes it. It does not wait for a process of reason to prove it, any more than the eye waits for reason to prove light, or the heart reasons to prove love. Reason and faith are not opposed to each other. They are different faculties for seeing, different methods for proving faith. Faith judges things that reason has not

the reason for judging. When a truth of God is spoken to me first my senses are exercised. If it be spoken, it is my hearing, if it be written, it is my sight that often causes me to reason the just meaning of the words, of the thought. It tells the sentiment to my spiritual faculties.

I am told of the existence of God. My senses cannot recognize him, my reason cannot demonstrate Him, but my spiritual nature, my soul confesses his existence, just as a heart confesses love. All that reason can prove confirms my faith. I am told of the incarnation of Christ. Neither sense nor reason can prove it, but my religious consciousness testifies that it is precisely what my condition needed. This was so wonderful, so glorious that it must be true.

I am told of the atonement. Reason cannot prove it. It would be known only by divine revelation. It is wonderfully suited to human ideas and service that the better instincts of men leap forward to embrace it. I do not wait for proofs.

So with the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. So with the resurrection of Christ. So with immortal life. Jesus declares them. The soul first enthuses thought and then action. Reason could never have discovered these.

EDWARD MASON.

“More Than Conquerors.”

A conqueror may compel submission but he cannot compel love. The conquered nation may be filled with hatred and thirst for revenge. Christ is more than a conqueror, for he not merely subdues his people under his sway, but he draws out their affections to himself; his enemies are thus changed into loving and devoted friends. The persecuting Saul, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, and making havoc of the church, became the devoted Apostle Paul, to whom “to live was Christ.” The Christian is “more than a conqueror.” The tribulation, distress, and persecution, but lead him all the closer to Christ; so that he not merely submits to these seeming ills, but he rejoices in tribulation, and actually thanks Christ for sending it. The sting is taken out of the persecution, and the Christian rejoices that he is counted worthy to suffer for Christ’s sake.

GEORGE GEFFREY.

Two Rulers.

“The Bible is so strict and old-fashioned,” said a young man to a grayhaired friend who was advising him to study God’s word if he would learn how to live. “There are plenty of books written nowadays that are moral enough in their teaching, and do not bind one down as the Bible.”

The old merchant turned to his desk and took out two rulers, one of which was slightly bent, with each of these he ruled a line, and silently handed the ruled paper to his companion.

“Well,” said the lad, “what do you mean?”

“One line is not straight and true, is it? When you mark out your path in life, do not take a crooked ruler.”—Christian worker.

Men are Four.

1. He knows not, and knows not he knows not. He is a fool; shun him.
2. He knows not, and knows he knows not. He is simple, teach him.
3. He who knows, and knows not he knows. He is asleep; wake him.
4. He who knows, and knows he knows. He is wise, follow him.—Ex.

Obedience is better than sacrifice. If we seek light contrary to the Bible, we shall surely get darkness. Don’t ask God about what you already know, nor what he has already expressed himself. Search the world and fall into line with its teachings, according to sound judgment and sanctified common sense.

The grandest event in a Christian man’s history ever witnessed by human eyes occurs when he surrenders his body. The soul moves toward God for the expected “Crown of life.” We ought to celebrate a Christian’s death as the most joyous and triumphant episode in their temporal career, and exult while we tremble and rejoice amidst our tears.—ADVOCATE.